

Application No. 10/825,046
Response to Restriction Requirement Dated October 3, 2005
Office Action mailed September 22, 2005

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (Original): A sterilized barrier apparatus, comprising
a sterile, tubular sheath that is collapsible into a collapsed condition and expandable from the collapsed condition into an expanded condition;
a hollow extension tube secured to a distal end of the sterile, tubular sheath; and
an aspiration tube having a distal end to which is attached the hollow extension tube, the sterile, tubular sheath being secured to the aspiration tube at a location spaced from the distal end of the aspiration tube and being in the expanded condition.

Claim 2 (Original): A sterilized barrier apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a surgical pack that includes the aspiration tube, the surgical pack including a cassette arranged to receive contents of the aspiration tube that are being aspirated, the aspiration tube having a proximal end closer to the cassette than the distal end of the aspiration tube, the location where the sterile, tubular sheath is secured to the aspiration tube being closer to the proximal end than to the distal end of the aspiration tube.

Claim 3 (Original): A sterilized barrier apparatus of claim 2, further comprising an instrument console with suction pump that, when activated, suctions the aspiration tube, the aspiration tube projecting from the instrument console.

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Claim 4 (Original): A sterilized barrier apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a surgical handpiece attached to the distal end of the aspiration tube.

Claim 5 (Original): A sterilized barrier apparatus of claim 1, wherein the surgical handpiece is attached to a distal end of the hollow, extension tube.

Claim 6 (Previously presented): A method of forming a sterilized barrier, comprising:

attaching a hollow extension tube to a distal end of an aspiration tube;

pulling a proximal end of a sterile, tubular sheath over and along the aspiration tube to expand the sterile tubular sheath from a collapsed condition into an expanded condition, a proximal end of the hollow extension tube being secured to the sterile, tubular sheath; and

securing the proximal end of the sterile, tubular sheath to the aspiration tube at a location spaced from the distal end of the aspiration tube, thereby forming a sterilized barrier.

Claim 7 (Original): A method of claim 6, further comprising aspirating atmospheric air through the aspiration tube.

Claim 8 (Original): A method of claim 6, further comprising aspirating fluid within a sterilized container through the aspiration tube.

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Claim 9 (New): A method of forming a sterilized barrier, comprising:
securing together a hollow extension tube and a distal end of an aspiration tube;
attaching together a distal end of an aspiration tube and the hollow extension
tube, and

securing a sterile, tubular sheath to the aspiration tube at a location spaced from
the distal end of the aspiration tube as the sterile, tubular sheath is in an expanded
condition, the sterile tubular sheath being expandable from a collapsed condition into
the expanded condition.

Claim 10 (New): A method of claim 9, further comprising aspirating
atmospheric air through the aspiration tube.

Claim 11 (New): A method of claim 9, further comprising aspirating fluid
within a sterilized container through the aspiration tube.